

participating in these serious and important concerns? Or are those differences of a nature that suggest rather that those affairs would be the better for the influence which, by her acknowledged nature, woman would give to them?

Of what does this so-called inferiority consist? Affectionate, sacrificing, sympathetic, capable of endurance, woman is the combination and personification of all those qualities we call spiritual. She is admittedly not the equal to man in his fighting, self-pushfulness, arrogance, and all the qualities we associated with strong animalism. On the surface these differences seem to mark the woman as the weaker of the two; but is it not somewhat questionable to declare that animal power is really stronger than spiritual power? Have we not come to regard mind as of greater power than matter? Do we not consider that Love is the greatest force in the Universe? If so, then it is rather late in the day to declare that because the male side of humanity is stronger on the animal side, it is therefore the nobler and higher-natured side of humanity.

It is usually conceded that in the woman the Love qualities are to be found more prevalent than anywhere else in the Universe. Then if Love is the "greatest thing in the world," there must be more than mere sentiment in the thought that woman is the highest developed creature of creation. At the present state of developed humanity, surely it is not wise to keep in a secondary place that being in whom the highest qualities yet found are pre-eminent. One would think the natural and reasonable conclusion would be to admit such a being and welcome her to all the considerations of modern times, so that the influence of the wisest and highest might be felt in all our deliberations.

It may be only tradition that declares woman to be the latest evolved creature of creation; but it is almost unconsciously believed to be the fact. The idea is probably due to the story of creation as given in the book of Genesis, wherein we are told that Adam was created before Eve, and that the woman came from the side of the man while he was in a deep sleep. And yet such a tradition would be supported by the accepted order and method of development, as suggested by the scientific doctrine of Evolution, in which each successive step in the ascending scale is marked by the coming of a more refined and lofty nature. Man is acknowledged to be higher than the animals, not on account of his greater bodily strength, but by reason of his mind power, his emotion and soul. The ascension, throughout all the long story of organic development, has been in this direction. The vegetable is higher than the mineral, and

that higher nature is expressed in beautiful blossoms and other sweet and tender aspects. The animals are supposed to be possessed of more intelligence than the vegetables; and so on, up to man, who is higher, more intelligent, and more spiritual than any specimen of living thing produced before his coming. If this tendency towards refinement and what we call "soul power" is the characteristic of each step in the ascending scale of Evolution, then the thought of the scriptural tradition is borne out that woman was a later creation than man; for if man is greater than all created things previous to his appearing, by virtue of his mind and soul power, then certainly woman is greater and higher than the other half of humanity, for there is no question that, as a whole, she possesses more of the affectionate, loving, and soul qualities than man.

I have seen it suggested by mystic writers that man was originally formed as a body with the two sexes combined—and that the separation came later. This cannot be wide of the mark, in view of the statements of scientific men that the lowest forms of organic life contain the reproductive organs in one body, and that the separation of the sexes was a later development in the history of life on this planet.

All this suggestiveness would induce us to picture the upward growth towards man as a struggle for the production of mind; and that, when mind was formed in man, its use would make him realise a higher nature even than mind, and this higher nature would continue the upward struggle till it had freedom to live its true life. As we conceive of this possibility we look upon woman as the personification of the qualities of this higher nature, for all her characteristics are on the spiritual side. Thus man and woman would be the two specimens of the highest form of creation: the two sides of the genus Homo. The Man certainly has more of the nature of the animal than the woman. The bodily strength, the propensity for struggle, the fighting, self-assertive qualities are acknowledged to be the characteristics of the man; while in the woman, the gentler, more refined, self-effacing and kinder aspects of human nature are more prevalent. And these are less like those associated with the animal world. Of course there will be found individual women with the animal qualities more pronounced than in some men, and some individual men will have the love qualities more developed than in some women; but it is generally admitted that considering the characteristics of women as a whole, and those of man as a whole, the gentler, love-like, soul qualities are more pronounced in woman than in man.